

How Should We Develop Biblical Friendships (1) (2022.01.30 Sabbath school Class)

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Q&A through the first few pages of "How Should We Develop Biblical Friendships," in the RHB series, "Cultivating Biblical Godliness."

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Our gracious, Lord and Heavenly.

Father, we thank you for this. Lord's Day. We thank you for this one day. In seven that we have been given that we might worship you. Lord, I pray that you would be with me as I speak today in that those listening might hear, not might hear, not my words, but those words which are from above watching, Christ's name we pray.

Amen. Okay, and I want to give one disclaimer right here in the beginning. I'm gonna have to make a reference to the Trinity and last time I did that, I was barraged with different comments. So I'm gonna try and do my best to say. But make that comment correctly, It's an in sort of an inside joke.

But anyway please please bear with me in that regard. Okay. How should we develop biblical? Friendships. I assume does. Everybody have their book. Okay, So Now the title of the book does not mean that we can't have friendships with those that are not in Christ. I think what the book is really trying to point out as we go through it, is that the friendships that are worth having are those that are in Christ and it also gives warning about some of the friendships that we might have outside of Christ and things that we should be wary of The first verse.

It starts with is in Proverbs 27:9 which says ointment in perfume Rejoice. The heart. So does the sweetness of a man's friend by Harding counsel? So I think that lays out or establishes for us at the beginning here that there's a priority that even the Bible places on the subject of friendship.

You know, it says that as we start the book here it says and today's culture does not provide great encouragement for the nurture and development of deep. Long-lasting or satisfying. Friendships such friendships, take time and sacrifice. And when I thought about that, we live in a culture today where it's a very, very hurried culture, Everything is instantaneous, We could blame that on a lot of things, I blame it on Federal Express, you know, Federal Express started, where you could have a letter overnight, or you could have a package overnight.

And so, as those type things happen, the expectation becomes the norm But there are many things, but in our world today, with all the activity going on, developing friendships is not something that has been given a priority. The other thing that it mentions in here, is that and our 21st century western culture, we emphasize busyness and we promote present possessing, and, and receiving more than sacrificing and giving.

Now, how does that play with friendship? Well friendship, true friendship true. Biblical friendship is a two-way street where you are giving and receiving in that friend. You're bearing with one another but we live in a materialistic world and I'm sure it's always been materialistic. But our society today, emphasizes that more where it's all about.

How many have heard people say? The golden rule is who ends up with the most toys at the end. A lot of horrible, what a horrible thing to think. But There are many people that will openly say that and then I think if you just listen to some of your friends or people that, you know, many people, They may not say those exact words but that's how they live It, it bears out in their worldview.

Now something else just as an inside I want to mention this past week on Friday, I had to I was at an all-day seminar a webinar. We're instead of going to a state of going to a meeting or a conference, I sat and watched my computer for eight hours which is really boring.

But anyway, but they had a speaker. He was secular. But you know, even As the Bible says about Balaam and the jackass said, you know, God used a jackass to speak Balaam. So God can use even what men of this world say that have certain amounts of wisdom tied in with it.

But this speaker was talking about the digital world. And when we talk about friendships and the things that take up our time, one of the things that he said, that this just blew me away. He said between the year 2008 In 2017, the amount of digital information, okay? That doesn't mean that you are looking at all this, but the amount of digital information that was available to you or that could be accessible had increased from 2008 or seven to 2017.

It had increased \$100,000 percent. Okay. And I think about that, we've got how many, how many of us never

leave home without this device, or you go into a restaurant and there's 50 TVs around you, You know. So the the amount of digital presence but what was even more interesting and more amazing to me, he said it increased a hundred thousand percent from 2007 to 2017.

He said, do you know how much it's increased from 2017 to today? See me want to guess on this because you won't get it right 100,000. No, keep no, he said from 2017 to today. Remember, it was a hundred thousand from 2008 to 2017. He said, from 2017 to today, the amount of available digital media has increased 6.4 million percent.

So You see that we are bombarded with, not only did, we have enough distractions before, we had the digital media but now with the the electronics world, we're just overwhelmed with things. And so these are the type things that can impact Our friendships. If we're not the development of Christian friendships, if we're not careful in those things.

Now, why is it important for us to develop biblical? Friendships. Does anybody have an answer? Iron jumping iron. That's that. Is that is true. That that's what. Okay, I'll give you credit for that In our book here. It says that that friendship is one of the primary means that God uses to strengthen his people.

So by having biblical friendships, we with other Christians, We are encouraged and encourage you one another. It's a reciprocal type thing. So that, that is why there is such importance in friendships. Because those friendships, many times are used in our lives. And you know, this is well as I do, even in the secular world one who is a friend can say things to another.

That a stranger couldn't say. And so the friendships in a biblical context, can be used to help the lesser grow in the Greek world. Even Plato, you know, this is a human philosopher. But even the Greek world, friendships were considered so important. That Plato devoted an entire book. Just to the discussion of friendship.

How important it was. So Where do we get probably the primary primary example of or picture of friendship? You were to go to the Bible and you were to say, okay, where does this talk about biblical friendships or the purpose? What would you give as an example? Then we have anybody?

Yes, sir. Peter James and John with Jesus Christ. That is one but I'm looking for the, as I say, the big Kahuna. The biggest. You know, that's right. The example, we get is reflected in the relationship between the members of the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

So that that relationship because In that relationship we experience where we see what perfect unity between the Father and the Son and the spirit. So this is probably the, the greatest example, it is the greatest example of what biblical relationship or friendship should be like, In in the book of John.

It expresses the love of the Father and the Son for each other 17 times that relationship between the two. So, out of that, as those members of the Trinity, enjoy this oneness one with another, we build on that with our human relationships, and there are some relationships. Let me ask you this question.

Can anybody tell me here? Can somebody read? Let's see, John 3:35, I meant to do that. You've got your Bible, John 3:35? I'd say the first hand on that. Oh, Nathan. No. Oh, I thought you had it already. I'm looking for somebody. Who's got it? Who's got it already?

John 3:35. Go ahead. Mary, Her father loves his son and has given all things into his hand, okay? The father loves his son and has given all things into his hand. How about John 17:23?

Who's got it? All right, Jim and you can move that they may be made perfect new one. And that the world may know that you have sent me and had loved them as you have loved me. Okay, so we see with the members of the Trinity, the unity. The relationship they have with one one another.

So who in the Bible Did God call his friend? She's human, but God called this individual, his friend is anybody know? Okay, let's see. The I got you one Gabrielle Abraham. Yes. He called Abraham called in friend. Now, talking about some other examples of godly friendships. Now we can go back to Kelly.

You had mentioned Jonathan and David correct. Okay? Can anybody think of a another one between two individuals, call and Timothy Paul and Timothy? How about another?

Roof and Naomi, that's it. That's another one there. All right, so when somebody read Proverbs, 18:24 for me, please. Proverbs 18:24 keep your Bibles at hand because I'm going to be asking you ready to read. Okay, Nathan. But then you continue plugs it. There's a friend who sticks closer than a brother, okay?

Read that one more time. Amen, of many companions. May come to ruin for me. But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Okay? So what that's saying there is a man may have many companions but there's a friend that sticks closer than the brother in Western culture, maybe in the rest of the world.

But since this is my reference point, I can say with certainty that I think we have a tendency to use

the word friend sort of carelessly. We call many people our friend when really they are more of a equations but they're not friend in the sense that we're talking, where there is a deep abiding relationship between the two people.

Now What book of the Bible gives us a lot of wisdom. Now, there are many places in the Bible but what book in the the Bible particularly and because it's thought of this is a wisdom book, gives us a lot of wisdom about living in the world, on our relationship, with others off, top your head Proverbs.

Okay, who can read Proverbs 17:17 for me.

Who's got it? I see a 17 Nathan. I get Mr. Dawn. A friend bus at all times and a brother been born for anniversary. Okay. So a friend loves it all times and and what was the second part of that verse rather is born or mm-hmm? Which means that There are times that as friends, we may not Always agree but that doesn't mean that we cannot have a deep and abiding love for one another.

So those are some of the things that distinguish what biblical friendship would look like. In fact from some of the texts we've just read here, it gives us the impression. That a biblical friendship is an important part of the life of a Christian having solid biblical friendships. Now, There are two central themes that come out of the Bible regarding friendship, which give us a picture of friendship.

The first one is that friendship has to involve. True friendship, true biblical friendship has to involve the mutual love and knitting together of one's soul. Okay, so who can read for me, Deuteronomy 13:6?

All right. Luke, If your brother to sign your mother, your son or your daughter walk through with them or your friend. Who's as your own soul, secretly entice me and say let us go to serve other gods which you have not known media of, you know, your problem. Read that part again and your friend who is what, who is it as your own soul, Your friend who is your own soul.

So that talks about a depth of relationship between a true friend that that is very, very great who can read for me. First Samuel 18 chapter 1, First Samuel, 18:1.

First one verse one? Yes. Okay, go ahead. You know, Now when he had finished eating dissolve, the soul of Johnson was nick to the solo of David and Johnson loved him as his own soul. Okay? So we see something here about biblical or Christian friendship. That there's a knitting and a love for the soul of another person.

And again as we go back to one of the very early statements I made in when I was started this today that the purpose of a biblical friendship or godly friendship is to help us grow in the things of God. So David and Jonathan both were godly men. They had their failings, but we see how this was an encouragement one to the other.

So the first thing or of the two things that give us a picture of biblical friendship in the Bible, as I said, the first one is the mutual love and the knitting of one's soul In the second is face-to-face, encounters, meaning that you can't like in face-net, don't you friend?

Someone, okay, they call that friending You. Is that correct? Facebook? What did I a face net, I'll face it. Sorry. Well hey you should know from that. I do not have Facebook and will never get it. Okay, because it gives to all those other people who you don't want to be friends with information about you.

But anyway so In Facebook, I think there's a term, you friend, someone. Okay. Well, who can read Exodus 33:11 for me?

Did you have it? Jeff, I thought you raised your hand. Okay. 3311. 33 11 and the Lord speak. Another Moses faced and face as a man speaking from his friend and he turned again into the camp, but his servant Joshua, the son of none, a young man farted, not out of the Tabernacle.

Okay, so the second characteristic of a biblical friendship is that it's what First it's knitting, the heart and soul but the second thing is what the friendship must be. What face to face? Now Again, digital media, you know it's not all bad and we can have a lot of things.

And and and I think in a lot of ways when I think about our use of the hope net, I think that has brought in my opinion, a greater intimacy, amongst our church, you know, because you can be anywhere and you can know what's going on in the life of this body But for a true biblical friendship to take place.

There has to be face-to-face time doesn't mean if someone's away from you that you can't have a friendship but there must be some of that who can read for me. Proverbs 27:17. All right. Stephanie iron. Shepherd's iron has one man, sharpened. Another okay, so, and what do we gain?

You know, we talked about the beginning in when we went into the beginning of the book here that friendship One of its primary purposes is just biblical. Friendship is the strengthen one another, and the things of God and somebody alluded to earlier that iron sharpens iron. So biblical friendships can be used to

help us grow and to make us, I'm not going to use the word better, but it can be have a sanctifying effect on us.

It can help us to grow in the things of God. So as iron sharpens iron and sometimes, the problem we have as sinners, we don't always like to have our iron sharpened, But God can use that. So now let's look at a couple examples of friendships in the Bible.

Probably the one that Mr. Jim alluded to earlier, going back to the early church. Was that of quality apostle and who was Paul's friend. Timothy the Bible says that there's probably not the Bible, but Scholars estimate there is probably about a 20-year differential between Paul. Yes sir. Does it say 12 in front of the reverse?

Which yes, the scripture says okay. Just say 20 years the generations. Okay, which could be 20 or 40 years? Jonathan was fighting ballads for his father before David was born. We thought things that the scriptures, right? No remote, we're talking about Tennessee and Paul or David? No Timothy and Paul but say what you said again about?

David David and Jonathan Here's generation. David being the elder, Huh? Jonathan was with the Army before they were born, okay? Okay. So so when we look at the founding of the church, we see one of the greatest examples of biblical friendship between Paul and Timothy, and that having spread in many times biblical friendships will, Sometimes develop along the lines of an elder in a younger.

I know that friendships that I've had with others many times. I used to have a friend in Memphis that was probably 40 years, my senior, but he had a tremendous impact on me as a young man So and I think there was a mutual respect and love there. He's now with the Lord, now see him again.

One day, but I like somebody to read First Timothy chapter 3, verses 10 and 11 and I have a question. I want to follow up. Okay. Did I Elizabeth Read it loud? Please and let them also be tested first, then help them serve as beacons that they prove themselves blameless, their wives, likewise must are doing the right spot.

Yeah, that's second. Timothy, Did I say first? Okay. Sorry about that. Please forgive me. Okay. Second, Timothy 3, 10 11, you however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim and like my face, my face, and my love, my steady since dead, my persecution, and my suffering that happens to me.

And and geographical at you mice, drop, which persecutes shown I learned yet from all the Lord. Rescument. Okay? So, what Elizabeth was reading there in? Second Timothy was Paul speaking to Timothy or talking about Timothy. So what does the example of Paul and Timothy here? Tell us about friendship or what are characteristics of friendships like Paul and Timothy had here From those verses.

Does anybody you can really roll it down into you, share the good and bad, you share the good and the bad. And also in this case, where you had an elder in a younger that the younger many times and it could go the other way. But generally we think the elder the younger is that the one really becomes an example to the other and they grow, you know, Paul taught Timothy.

He taught him in the things of God and then Timothy grew up to do what To begin to imitate emulate. The things that he was taught by Paul. It says here, there's a quote in here from biblical scholar FF Bruce, it says Timothy regularly or readily surrendered, whatever personal ambitions, he might have cherished in order to play the part of a son to Paul and help him with his missionary activity.

So Timothy here was emulating that which he was taught. Now I have one quick question. Let me look at my digital media here. What time are we supposed to end?

10:45. Okay. So with that said, We're at 10 10, 10, 30 10:38, I'm at page, five of a 35 page booklet, So I can do one of two things. I can go into hyperactive mode and just like go to the conclusion and in there or if the other Members of the session will allow me.

I'll pick it up next week. Yes, ma'am. You pick it up next week? This book was so good. I really like to hear. Okay? Session members. Do I take that? I did I take that as a yes from your friend. Okay. Charlie. Charlie James. I don't get a vote.

You can. Well, Charlie, are you good with this? All right. Are you good with picking this up next week? Yeah. Okay. Because like I said, I'm the page five and I just I have three pages of notes here and I just finished page one. So I'll have to I'll have to pack it in more with a little faster.

But anyway, I hope this sets the, the framework or the the bottom for what, or the reference point for what a biblical friendship would look like. And that it might help each one of us as we think about our friendships and our investments of time, because in order to develop biblical, friendship, one must invest of themselves.

And so we need to count those costs. There may be, there may be relationships or things that not that

we have to in those but they may not deem the time. Yes Mr. Phil aspiration. Next week is watching an percent.

So I think So I'm two weeks out. Okay, so that You are going to do a Q&A this year. Oh well, so I'll be ready for next week. Okay. All right, Of course, I think it's Mr. Magnum sent a schedule for those who are teaching and it's helpful for people to know about when they're going to teach.

So you know, you could the figure out if you're going to need one more week or two more weeks and then if all of you who have your books could look at the materials you've got and give Charlie an idea of how many weeks you people take, then he can make a revised schedule and people will know when they're teaching the how much?

Well, we all we also can look at it that it gives them more time to prepare. When I went through, I looked at the the link to the other books and I took a lot of them go to page 20 22 pages somewhere in there. Mine went to 35 and as I was working on, as I said, I said, I don't think I can.

I can make it through this without just going over it so fast. So, anyway, you all now have the opportunity. If you haven't, had a chance to read it, completely to read this and come prepared next week to conclude because I think the coming part is the most important part as we as we go forward.

Let's close in prayer, Our gracious, Lord to him, like, father, we thank you again for this Lord's Day. We ask now, Lord, that is we enter into your present presence through the worship of you. We ask for that, you would prepare our hearts and minds and that your name may be glorified in its root at all.

Or it's the name of Jesus Christ. Our Lord and Savior, we pray. Amen.